

SOUTH AFRICAN RADIO LEAGUE NEWS FOR SUNDAY 10 DECEMBER 2017

Good morning and welcome to the weekly news bulletin of the South African Radio League read by [your name, call sign and QTH]

The South African Radio League broadcasts a news bulletin each Sunday, in Afrikaans as well as English at 08:15 and 08:30 Central African Time respectively, on HF as well as on various VHF and UHF repeaters. These broadcasts are relayed via Echolink by ZS6JPL. A podcast is available on the League website.

Audio and text bulletins may be downloaded from the League website at www.sarl.org.za where you can also sign up to receive future bulletins by e-mail.

We start the bulletin this morning with news of a silent key.

It is with deep regret that we must announce that the key of Mimi Roach, ZS5YO, went silent on Saturday 25 November 2017.

We extend our sincere condolences to her daughter Molly, W0MOM (ex ZS5MM and ZS1KE), son-in-law Gordon, W0RUN (ex ZS1FE and ZS5SL), grandchildren, family and friends.

PAUSE

In the news, today:

THE SARL TO HOST THE 2018 YOUNGSTERS ON THE AIR (YOTA) SUMMER CAMP

DECEMBER YOTA MONTH IS UNDER WAY

and

THE TINUS LANGE 7066 TECHNICAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

Stay tuned for more information on these and other interesting news items.

BLACK FRIDAY SARL MEMBERSHIP SPECIAL

The Black Friday SARL membership special that was advertised on the League web site on Friday 24 November 2017 was well supported with 26 new members joining the League. A big thank you to our members who supported the initiative to grow our membership. Currently our membership figure stands on 1 645.

THE SARL TO HOST THE 2018 YOUNGSTERS ON THE AIR (YOTA) SUMMER CAMP

The League received a positive response from Lisa Leenders, PA2LS, the IARU Region 1 Youth WG Chairman, following the acceptance and approval of the

SARL proposal to host the 2018 YOTA Summer Camp by the Region 1 Executive Committee. As it will be held in the southern hemisphere, it will be the YOTA Winter Camp!

This annual event brings together Young people from the Region 1 Member Societies for an entire week to create, in addition to amateur radio, an opportunity to learn all about different nationalities and cultures, foster international friendships and goodwill as well as to learn new skills.

Work started in early November 2017, when a working group was established to perform a realistic assessment of our ability to host the event in August 2018 and to compile a proposal for the League Council's approval and subsequent submission to Region 1.

The SARL and the South African YOTA Working Group are delighted with the response and we are looking forward to hosting a successful YOTA 2018 event as an unforgettable African experience that will be remembered for many years to come. Dr Gary Immelman, ZS6YI, has accepted the role as patron of the event.

The SARL President conveyed his sincere appreciation to the YOTA working group for their successful proposal and stated that this is a golden opportunity for the SARL and amateur radio in South Africa to make their mark in promoting amateur radio amongst the youth, locally and in Africa, in hosting the 2018 YOTA Winter Camp.

DECEMBER YOTA MONTH IS UNDER WAY

December is Youngsters on the Air Month in IARU Region 1 when young radio amateurs and prospective young amateurs get on the air from stations throughout the Region using call signs with YOTA as the suffix. The idea is to demonstrate Amateur Radio to the younger generation and to encourage young people to become licensed and active on the air. More than 35 stations with a YOTA suffix are registered and active on the bands. The December YOTA Month activity is not a competition; it's all about having fun!

The SARL has registered the special call sign ZS9YOTA on the Region 1 web site as an educational call sign for use by South African Clubs and individuals during December 2017. To reserve a slot to use the ZS9YOTA call sign on a daily basis or for information, please contact Koos, ZR6KF, on e-mail koos.zr6kf@gmail.com or alternatively Nico, ZS6QL, on zs6ql@mweb.co.za. The activity schedule and the rules are available on the SARL landing page at www.sarl.org.za

THE TINUS LANGE 7066 TECHNICAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

Do you enjoy building pieces of equipment to use in or outside the Shack? Or software to use for amateur radio? Well then how about entering for the Tinus Lange 7066 Technical Excellence Award? The award is bestowed annually on the League member who submits a technical project in any of the following

categories a) the design and/or construction of projects such as a pre-amp, SWR bridge, patching unit, automatic ID'er, practical antenna ideas, mast, portable gear, power supplies, etc., or b) any software for use in Amateur Radio.

The submission must include the actual items (if size and mass allow) or photographs (particularly in the case of antennas, masts, etc.), and a complete write-up in article form with illustrations/pictures, ready for publication in Radio ZS. All entries to be displayed (where practical, otherwise photographs) at the SARL National Convention and the Award will be presented at the Annual Awards Dinner. The Award is a framed certificate and a cash award of R1 000. The closing date for entries is Wednesday 31 January 2018 and must be sent to secretary@sarl.org.za.

You are listening to a news Bulletin of the South African Radio League. Have you told someone about amateur radio recently?

SARL NEWS TEAM

The News Team would like to thank John Keulder, ZS6BXL, for his work as Afrikaans bulletin recorder during the past number of years. John has decided to step down. Thank you to Anette Jacobs, ZR6D, who volunteered to take over from John.

2018 DIARY OF EVENTS

The SARL Secretary is busy finalising the 2018 Diary of Events and now requests Clubs and individuals to provide him with dates of Club activities to include in the Diary. These could be flea markets, AGM's, dates of club meetings, club functions, SDR Workshops, special event calls, etc. Please send the information to secretary@sarl.org.za by 15 December 2017.

Thank you to the Cape Town Amateur Radio Centre and the West Rand Amateur Radio Club for their quick response.

LIGHTNING SCATTER TESTS BY ZS4A

Rickus De Lange, ZS4A, at Bethlehem conducted some interesting Lightning Scatter tests on 30 November 2017, while a thunderstorm was raging near the border of Swaziland about 291 km northeast of him and beaming his 12-element Yagi at it. He recorded a Fast Graph of WSJT-X on 144,250 MHz MSK144 where lightning flashes produced spots on the chart. He did a musical transmission on the frequency and then asked Carl, ZS6CBQ, to listen for him without success.

Rickus then changed to AM broadcasting stations and ended up listening to the 702 kHz commercial station when he heard the studio presenter's voice clearly for about 8 seconds before it suddenly disappeared. ZS4A feels that this experiment worked; now the 50 and 144 MHz tests are lying ahead, so "please hold thumbs for them"!

Many years ago, Mike, ZS2FM, discovered clear audio signals from a FM broadcasting station in Durban, operating in the 87,5 - 108 MHz FM band, while he monitored it on a domestic FM receiver in East London during a distant thunderstorm. The distance between East London and Durban is well over 400 km. Every time a distant lightning flash occurred a burst of audio appeared that lasted up to ten seconds, but the AM lightning crash was inaudible as the FM receiver limited it. The inference that one can draw from the above is that FM modulation would be the best mode for Lightning Scatter communication on 50 or 144 MHz to eliminate AM lightning crashes. Furthermore, a two-way contact could be more successful if the thunderstorm is close to the VHF path between the distant operators. It would only require a few lightning flashes to complete a brief QSO.

THE SARL VHF/UHF LUCKY DRAW

The winner of the SARL VHF/UHF Lucky Draw is Andre Botes, ZS2ACP. Congratulations Andre, your prize will be sent to you shortly.

RESULTS OF THE SARL NEWBIE QSO PARTY

Four logs and one control log were received for the second Newbie QSO Party held on Saturday 25 November 2017. The results are:

1st Kayla de Wet, ZU3K 294 points 2nd Sonet de Wet, ZS3SW 280 points
3rd Ryno Ruppung, ZU3RR 182 points 4th Woody Collet, ZS3WL 90 points

Thanks to all who participated. We really hope that the QSO Party will grow in 2018.

NEW COMMITTEE FOR THE SABC AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

At the Club's AGM held on 2 December 2017, the following committee members were chosen:

Chairman: Pieter van Wyk, ZS6PVW Vice Chairman: Yvonne van Dijk, ZR6TBL Secretary and Social: Magda van Wyk, ZS6MVW Treasurer: Lizette Pienaar, ZS6LZT Webmaster: Marianne van Dijk, ZS6ANA Technical and repeater: Pieter van Wyk, ZS6PVW and Mark Esilva, ZS6MAE Technical assistants: Magda van Wyk, ZS6MVW and Riaan Barkhuizen, ZS6BAR

The AGM was followed with a social gathering in the form of a Bring and Braai. We thank the previous committee members for their hard work and wish the new committee the best of luck.

PROPAGATION REPORT

Hannes Coetzee, ZS6BZP, reports that the solar activity is expected to stay at very low levels. There are currently no sunspots visible. If you want to do your own frequency predictions, the expected effective sunspot number for the week will be around one. The 15 to 30 m bands may provide lots of DX fun. Please visit the website spaceweather.sansa.org.za for further information.

Finally, a Diary of some upcoming events:

Until midnight UTC this evening the ARRL 10 Meter Contest 15 December
the NARC closes for the Festive season; the closing date for comments on the
2018 SARL Blue Book and input for the 2018 Diary of Events 26 December
closing date for articles for the January Radio ZS 1 January start of the ARRL
International Grid Chase and the 2018 CQ Marathon 8 January NARC opens
for business 20 January SDR Workshop at the NARC 19 to 21 January the
PEARS National VHF/UHF Contest 27 January the Summer QRP Contest 30
January closing date for proposals and synopses for AMSAT SA Symposium
papers 31 January closing date for nominations for Council and SARL Awards
and for AGM motions

To conclude our bulletin a quick overview of our main news item

December is Youngsters on the Air Month in IARU Region 1, when young
radio amateurs and prospective young amateurs get on the air from stations
throughout the Region using call signs with YOTA as the suffix. The idea is to
demonstrate Amateur Radio to the younger generation and to encourage young
people to become licensed and active on the air. More than 35 stations with
a YOTA suffix are registered and active on the bands. The December YOTA
Month activity is not a competition; it's all about having fun!

This concludes our bulletin for this morning.

Clubs and individuals are invited to submit news items of interest to radio
amateurs and shortwave listeners, if possible, in both English and Afrikaans,
by following the news inbox link on the South African Radio League web page.
News items for inclusion in the bulletin should reach the news team no later
than the Thursday preceding the bulletin date.

You are welcome to join us every Sunday morning for the weekly amateur radio
program, 'Amateur Radio Today' at 10:00 Central African Time. The program
can be heard on VHF and UHF repeaters countrywide and on 7 082 kHz lower
side-band and on 7 205 kHz and 17 760 kHz AM. There is also a podcast
available from Dick Stratford, ZS6RO. A rebroadcast can be heard on Monday
evenings at 18:30 Central African Time on 4 895 kHz AM.

We welcome your signal reports, comments and suggestions; please send these
by e-mail to artoday@sarl.org.za. Sentech sponsors the radio transmissions on
the non-amateur frequencies.

You have listened to a news bulletin compiled by Dennis Green, ZS4BS, edited
by Dave Reece, ZS1DFR, and read by

From the news team, best wishes for the week ahead.

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